

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the consideration shown by the Office as evidenced by the Office Action mailed on 5 August 2003. In that Office Action, the Examiner objected to the title of the application and rejected claims 1-18. In this Response, Applicants have amended the title and claim 1, and have cancelled claim 2. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application by the Examiner in light of the above amendment and the following remarks offered in response to the Office Action.

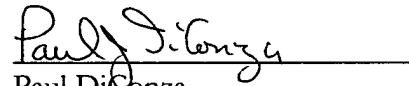
The Examiner presents a number of rejections to the claims of the present application. In each case a combination of references is used to assert rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination. Applicants have cancelled claim 2 and have amended claim 1 to include the limitations formerly recited by cancelled claim 2. Applicants respectfully submit that this amendment renders moot all of the rejections of claim 1 and its dependent claims, except for those rejections that dealt with claim 2. For this reason, Applicants will explicitly address these rejections herein.

Each of the rejections to claims 2-4 and independent claims 17 and 18 included the application of EP 490,882 A1 (hereinafter '882) in combination with other references. The Examiner is apparently using this reference to purportedly show that the prior art teaches, suggests, or discloses using a pilot arc power supply to provide the coating, as recited in originally filed claim 2, and claims 17-18. However, after careful review of '882, Applicants respectfully submit that there is nothing in '882 that suggests the use of a pilot arc power supply in operating the torch in non-transferred mode. In describing the general operation of the torch in col. 5-6, this reference merely refers to "a power supply" (col. 5, line 13) and further that a "switch or relay" is used to cut power to the pilot arc circuit when the non-transferred mode is to be discontinued (col. 6, lines 30-33). As such, '882 provides no more suggestion or teaching than another reference used by the Examiner, French 2,527,891 ('891), wherein a torch is described that is capable of use in both transferred and non-transferred modes. Neither of these references, or any other applied in the Office Action, suggests operating the torch in pilot arc mode using a separate power supply for transferred and non-transferred modes. In contrast, the present application clearly describes that the PTA apparatus contemplated by the present invention includes multiple power supplies, including a pilot arc power supply that is designed to provide low currents for use in non-transferred mode and a second power supply capable of providing high currents for use in transferred arc mode. See, for example, paragraph 0012 of the present application. Nothing in the applied prior art teaches, suggests, or discloses that the non-transferred mode of torch

operation, using a separate, low-current power supply, is a desirable means for applying a coating to a substrate. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1, its dependent claims 3-16, and independent claims 17-18 are patentably distinct from the applied prior art for this reason.

In light of the remarks presented herein, Applicants believe that this serves as a complete response to the subject Office Action. If, however, any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul DiConza", is written over a horizontal line.

Paul DiConza

Reg. No. 48,418

General Electric Company

Building K1, Room 3A60

Telephone: (518) 387-6131

Schenectady, New York
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